

UPDATE

A Fact-Based Perspective on Pesticide Residues

Many people think pesticide residues pose a cancer risk. In a recent survey conducted by the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR), 72 percent of Americans named pesticide residues a risk factor. Yet, there is no convincing scientific evidence to support this belief.

To provide the public with reliable information, AICR has issued a new brochure: *The Facts About Pesticides and Food Additives*. This brochure summarizes what is scientifically known about residues that may be on the vegetables and fruits you buy. The information comes from a landmark report prepared by a worldwide panel of scientists, who reviewed over 4,500 studies on diet and cancer. They concluded that pesticide residues or food additives do not increase cancer risk when used as regulated by law. It is important to remember that U.S. government, United Nations and World Health Organization closely regulate the use of pesticides and food additives.

A Few Tips

People who eat more vegetables and fruits have a lower risk of cancer than those who eat few – even if residues are present. Diets high in vegetables and fruits help protect against cancers of the colon, rectum, stomach, lung, mouth, pharynx and esophagus. A mostly plant based diet is also linked to a reduced risk for cancers of the breast, bladder, pancreas and larynx. If everyone ate at least five or more servings of vegetables and fruits per day, cancer rates could fall by at least 20 percent. There are simple precautions you can take to make your food even safer.

- Select produce that has no dirt, cuts, insect holes, molds or decay.
- Scrub produce under running water.
- Peel off the skin, if desired or discard outer leaves.
- Trim fat from meat and poultry, which can store residues of some pesticides.
- Consider buying certified organic foods.
- Eat a variety of foods to reduce your exposure to any one additive or contaminant.

Vegetables and fruits are disease fighting, nutritional powerhouses. Plant foods help prevent cancer by providing the body with a variety of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals (plant substances) and dietary fiber. Each plant food possesses a unique profile of these protective compounds, so you should eat a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans everyday. To determine if you have a healthy plate, it is important to remember that two-thirds (or more) should be plant foods and one-third (or less) should be fish, poultry or red meat.

Call AICR at 1-800-843-8114, ext. 10 and request a free copy of *The Facts About Pesticides and Food Additives*.

Source: American Institute for Cancer Research



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